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Poetry & Wesleyanism

1849

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THE
P O P E R Y
OF
WESLEYANISM
AS IT IS;
OR,
“THE MARKS OF THE BEAST,”
FAITHFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY POINTED OUT
BY A
METHODIST PREACHER.

“Popery is popery whether nakedly exposed in all its deformity, or partly concealed in apparel termed PROTESTANT; and it is often the more dangerous by being disguised as a snake hid in the grass, may do more harm than one apparent on the beaten path.”—JOHN ROGERS.

“If there be but one body of legislators it is no better than tyranny.”—SPECTATOR.

“Tame submission to usurped power has hitherto been the malady of human nature.”—ROBERT HALL.

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"HARDLY one competent and impartial judge will deny, that the past and present unhappy contest carried on by the Wesleyan preachers against the rights of the Wesleyan people, a contest not "for the faith once delivered to the saints," but for power and even profit, or for power, as power includes or leads to profit, for priest-rulive power, for arbitrary and absolute ecclesiastical dominion over the hundreds of thousands of Wesleyan people,—hardly one proper judge will deny that the unhappy and unholy contest of the preachers, gives energy to the infidel, and spreads the domain of infidelity. The conference, a body professing the higher degree of holy love, or even perfection, (and who really are, as a body, good and holy men,) prefer, deliberately prefer breaking up the fold of Christ, and scattering His sheep, to relinquishing their mastery and rule ; prefer endangering the salvation of souls, so far as they endanger by wrongly expelling, to giving up their priest-rulive power. * * * In order to keep their priest-rule, they certainly cast out some, and without a real probability of getting in others more easily with priest-rule than without. * * * They do a positive and palpable evil, without a well founded expectation of thereby obtaining a compensating good. Now can the conference do this thing without causing many irreligious men to sneer and scoff at religion, to think better of infidelity, and perhaps to blaspheme and become infidel? Believe it who can;—I cannot."—ROGERS' ANTIPOPO-PRIESTIAN.—Published, 1839.

Wes. 1491

THE
POPERY OF WESLEYANISM,

&c. &c.

THE Wesleyan Conference of 1849 has been characterized by proceedings which will be registered in the annals of ecclesiastical history, and be looked upon by after generations with feelings near akin to those with which *we* now look upon the proceedings of a persecuting papacy and a degenerate protestantism. They involve the very same principles. And those who are taking a prominent part in conserving methodism as it is, by issuing declarations as tests of uniformity—arraigning pious ministers upon suspicion—clamouring down every speaker who dares to question their infallibility—refusing to hear the reasons by which those were actuated who had not signed the declaration—and expelling without evidence, are influenced, however unconsciously to themselves, by the very same spirit which instituted the Romish Inquisition and lit the fires of Smithfield. What? and has methodism come to this? Is that spiritual reformation begun by John Wesley, so soon degenerating into a body contending for place, profit, and power? Alas! alas! it is! The marks of the Beast are upon it; and unless something can be devised to check the deterioration, so soon commenced, and so rapidly spread, ICHABOD will ere long be written on one of the most useful and hopeful sections of the christian church; and Wesleyanism will be the name of a fallen community.

In giving expression to fears and convictions, not of yesterday's date, let us not be regarded as hostile to methodism. Let this publication

be viewed in its proper light—as the act of a faithful friend, wishing to see methodism purged of those corruptions which if not removed will destroy its usefulness and make its existence an evil. Methodism was intended to bless the world. It is adapted to do so; and if those, who, by a mistaken zeal for its welfare are hastening its destruction, will only alter the course which they are now so assiduously pursuing—awake to a conviction of their error—and adopt a more liberal policy, such as the advanced state of society requires, methodism shall yet fulfil its mission—the late disgraceful proceedings of conference shall be regarded as errors and infirmities and stand as beacons to warn posterity—and through methodism, millions at home and abroad shall yet become the subjects of grace and the heirs of glory. The condition of methodism, desperate as it is—is not hopeless. Let it purge itself and it shall yet stand—it shall yet prosper. But *purge* itself IT MUST. It possesses in its polity the spirit of anti-christ—the principles of popery. It cannot retain them and prosper. It cannot retain them and stand still. *It* must either destroy *them* or *they* will destroy *it*. There is no alternative. It must either alter or sink.

To these statements—to these prognostications, let the lovers of methodism give heed; and let even the powers that be—the conservative rulers of methodism themselves give heed; let them not construe plainness of speech into unkindness of feeling; let them not designate fidelity, censoriousness; nor treat admonition as though they were infallible. The wisest—the holiest men may err, and by error, may damage and even destroy the very object which they intended to promote. Let them consider also, that scenes and circumstances, such as this conference has presented, are not the most favourable helps to rectitude of motive, or infallibility of proceeding; a brother outside may stand at a distance from the battle-field—a spectator of the conflict, and form very different, and it may be more correct opinions, of the tactics employed, than those themselves engaged—than those whom the smoke of preconceived opinions, the din of clashing speakers, and the artillery of loud vociferations have almost confounded, and rendered, to some extent at least, partial and incompetent judges. Let them on the bare probability of error, suffer the words of remonstrance, and let them in the light of gospel truth, review the sayings and doings of this era-commencing conference. For fully assured are

we that if they will do this, in returning from the confused and clamorous scenes which they have recently witnessed ; if they will retire to their closets and studies, and review the proceedings of that memorable convocation, with a desire to know the will of God—to analyse the motives by which they have been actuated—and to ascertain on what principles, **METHODISM AS IT IS**, is based ; fully assured are we, that some will rise from the task deeply humbled before God—that misgivings will take hold of others as to the course they have pursued—that interpreting this conference's proceedings will lead all to conclusions which they had never dreamt of—and that they will discover indications of corruption, and read “the marks of the beast,” in a polity, which they have hitherto regarded as the only one conservative of methodism.

Wesleyan polity is at this moment exciting the attention of the methodist body, and of the public generally, as it has never done before. The result is dissatisfaction. But not with the doctrines of methodism. They are the essence of gospel truth. Nor with the piety or talents of the ministry. No. These are her hope. If such a system of polity was in the hands of men whose piety and talents were of a questionable or inferior order, we might calculate on the results being speedily of a baneful character. Still such a polity in the hands of any men is a temptation to abuses which would require a power more than human to resist. In Wesleyanism it has been abused, and these abuses have led to the dissatisfaction. Judging from the tone of correspondents, in journals open for their communications, it is evident that this dissatisfaction exists to a very considerable extent ; that it is spreading among every class of the community ; and that a spirit of investigation has begun, before which no system of despotism can stand, however sagaciously devised ; however ably defended. An Islington correspondent has justly remarked, that “there never was a time when it behoved the members of the methodist society to think more dispassionately, to judge more coolly, and to act more firmly, than at the present. Never before was it more needed that a sober and decisive judgment should be employed, in the investigation of the great principles, which must force themselves upon the convictions and understandings of those most affected by them.”

This correspondent, it is plain, only expresses the views and

feelings of thousands. The letters received by conference towards the close of its sittings, shew that the feeling without is considerable. Had not the feelings of the people, as expressed to conference, been strong they would not "have expressed surprise, that *such men* should have joined in condemning the proceedings of conference;" a deputation would not have returned reporting "that the people were deeply grieved;" nor would the conference after a long conversation as "to what means they should take to quell the public mind" have appointed a committee to prepare documents for the purpose. What kind of documents the committee will prepare, to accomplish this end under these circumstances, we are at a loss to conceive. It is the system that is wrong and not the public mind. And the only way to quell the public mind will be to reform the system. To talk of quelling the public mind of Englishmen in the nineteenth century, when they are conscious of abuses and crying for reform, is like talking of arresting the sun in its course, or keeping the ocean at low water mark. It cannot be done. It ought not. Rather look into the system and let what is wrong be rectified; let what is wanted, so far as it is right, be conceded. There can be no doubt but that Wesleyanism, so far as its present polity is concerned, is fundamentally wrong. It will not bear examination. The more the public examine it, and examine it they will, the more will the dissatisfaction increase. It contains the elements of popery. It has degenerated, and unless purged, will degenerate. Nothing can stop it. Let both Wesleyan rulers and Wesleyan people, then, ponder over the subjoined remarks. For you they are written. "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say."

One element in popery and one of the plainest marks of the Beast on "methodism as it is," is

UNCHECKED PRIESTLY RULE.

"Priestly government" says the *Nonconformist* "is essentially the same every where: * * * * And of all bodies, a pure ecclesiastical one is evermore the most tyrannical, the least fitted to be entrusted with power, and the most impatient and discourteous under the smallest opposition." The correctness of these statements must be obvious at first sight to every one who is conversant with ecclesiastical history.

What is the history of popery but the history of priest-rule? And what are all its abominations but the fruits—the matured and ripened fruits of priestly dominion? Popery, as it began to exist in the apostolic churches, was at first, apparently harmless and inoffensive. Those who originated it never apprehended the ruinous character of its results. But from the first moment of its existence *it was POPERY*; the germ contained in itself the elements of all that popery has either been, or done; its vitality lay hid as in a grain of corn, and required only the influence of soil, rain, wind and sunshine to bring out the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Time developed its inherent properties, and will do so again. Scatter them where you will, the seeds of popery will bring forth the fruits of popery.

Is it said, that the piety of the ministers is a guarantee against the abuse of their absolute and unchecked power. I would ask, how much stronger a gaurantee is the piety of ministers in the Wesleyan churches than was the piety of ministers in the early churches? But leaving supposition, and turning to facts—what do the proceedings of this memorable conference say for the piety of its ministers? Do they say that ministerial piety is a guarantee against the abuse of ministerial power? No. The expulsion of aged, useful and respected ministers on the bare ground of suspicion—without accusers and without evidence; the expulsion of ministers for not signing an unconstitutional declaration, and refusing to furnish a tyrannical precedent, by answering an indefinite number of questions, intended, if possible, to make them their own accusers; the expulsion of ministers for writing “Fly Sheets” (even if they had) **WITHOUT FIRST PROVING THOSE “FLY SHEETS” TO BE A HEAP OF BASE FABRICATIONS**, is an abuse of power—an impulse of despotism, which might have passed in Portugal or Spain; but in England such an act is a century behind the times, and cannot be regarded by any free born Englishman but as an invasion upon his national privileges—a tarnish on his country’s reputation. Wesleyanism, as it is, contains this element of popery, viz. absolute priestly dominion. On a variety of occasions it has been exercised in objectionable forms. But this conference has outraged every feeling of propriety—trampled on rights, which are the inalienable property of every human being—and signalised itself by acts of which Rome itself might be ashamed.

Absolute and unchecked priestly power is marked on the forehead of "Wesleyanism as it is." This is plain speaking. And what Dr. Bunting said of the *Wesleyan Times*, perhaps his friends will say of this pamphlet, viz. "that it is hostile to methodism," but I would reply in the language of Mr. Griffith on that occasion, and say "this is a matter of opinion." Our object is to benefit methodism; to snatch it from an untimely and inglorious end; and whether the conservators of methodism as it is, give us credit for such intentions or not, our record is on high. It is as settled a conviction in our minds, as is the fact of our existence, that the REFORMERS of methodism are its CONSERVATORS—that the friends of methodism as it is, are in reality methodism's greatest foes. With these convictions we lift up our voice; we cry aloud; we spare not; we dare not spare. To spare would be to betray. Sincerely then, affectionately, and earnestly would we call upon every Wesleyan to awake; to do what present exigencies may seem to require; to do it deliberately, yet firmly; and to do it in a plain and unmistakeable form; for if the Wesleyan people let the proceedings of this conference pass, without a loud and simultaneous expression of their disapproval, both a knowledge of human nature and an acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, warrant us in saying, that the spirit of conference despotism will wax stronger and stronger—the cloud which was little as a human hand will spread—the drops of tyranny which have already fallen, will only be the precursors of the teeming shower—while the destructive elements with which that cloud is charged, will, at no distant period, stream as with forked lightnings on the peoples' heads. But is there no remedy? Is the ruin of methodism inevitable? No. There is a remedy. And that remedy is in the peoples' hands; IT IS TO CHECK ABSOLUTE PRIESTLY DOMINION. This is the panacea for the Wesleyan community. This is the conservative of methodism. Let the people, then, demand firmly that which is their right, and never again consider methodism secure, until the people have a voice in its highest legislative assembly. Lay representation will be for methodism a happy conductor, around which, the furious elements which threaten it, will harmlessly play—stream down—and pass off, until the black portentous cloud shall have discharged the whole of its otherwise destructive and ruinous contents. Then what a calm! What an inexpressible serenity! Hail

happy hour! These unholy conflicts shall end. These scenes of contention and tumult shall disappear. Methodism shall be purged of its popery, and that mark of the beast be wiped away, which consists in absolute priest-rule, and which, so long as it exists, will expose it to a participation in the awful judgments denounced against anti-Christ.

Another element in popery, and a second mark of the Beast on "methodism as it is," is

ITS INTERFERENCE WITH THE RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE.

This was the second step in popery. The first was to get the power. The second to exercise it. Despotism always aims at uniformity, and in doing so, it has necessarily to interfere with the rights of conscience. It was so with popery. As gentle at first, we may unhesitatingly say, as the proceedings of the present conference. But the spirit grew. The right of private judgment was denounced. The exercise of it was deemed heresy; and at last, the unrighteous penalty was inflicted by implements the most excruciating and fatal. These evils however, were not the productions of a day. It took years and centuries to bring them to maturity. But the beginning of evil is like the letting out of water. Surely then, no one can look at modern methodism in the light of these facts, without being filled with apprehension and alarm.

Popery originally, did but little that could be seized upon as notoriously wrong. Up to the third century, the germ of popery lay buried. In the fourth century it sprouted. It began by proscribing knowledge; sanctioning superstition; and then introducing the worship of images. In the seventh century it propounded the dogma of infallibility. But not until the twelfth century, did the priests claim the right and power of excommunication. Methodism, on the contrary, contains now, in the second century of its existence, the germ of all these evils; and, if they are not checked, who will venture to say what methodistic polity will be, ere the twelfth century of its existence shall dawn? What is condemning a public journal by conference vote, but proscribing knowledge, as far as the nineteenth century will admit? The *Wesleyan Times* is under the ban of the conference; and the *British Banner*

under that of the *Watchman*; and woe to the Wesleyan who dares to touch the unholy things! What is the veneration with which the name of John Wesley is expressed by Wesleyan dignitaries, and Wesleyan people, but the germ of ideal worship—and who that knows the rapidity with which a deteriorating principle spreads, will say what will be the end of household busts and a connexional statue?—especially when we hear the President say at its inauguration, at the Richmond Institution, “I expect great moral and spiritual good from the erection of this statue!!!” Moral and spiritual good to methodism from a statue of its founder!!! Oh, could but the spirit of Wesley have animated that statue—heard those expressions, and uttered a reply, would he not have exclaimed, “How are the mighty fallen!!!” Superstition, we would with pleasure admit, has not as yet made rapid advances. But the very appearances of evil ought to be avoided. Is there nothing to fear from the introduction of RELICS into the Woodhouse Grove School?* The tendencies are all towards Rome. As it respects infallibility, listen to the speeches of intelligent conservative ministers, as they have been delivered during the conference sittings, and who can hear men affirm, that “disloyalty to methodism is disloyalty to Christ”—who can hear them thus virtually maintain, that it is as wicked to question the acts of the methodist executive, as to question the doctrines of Christ, without shuddering at the arrogation which is so presumptuous and pope-like? The power of excommunication, Wesleyan ministers have long possessed, and frequently exercised. Excommunication ought ever to be the act of the Church and not of the priest. It is a power which any one individual should tremble to possess, and which no one individual ought to exercise. This power may not have been extensively abused as yet, in the operations of methodism, but where there is a disposition to interfere with the rights of conscience, such as this conference has displayed—where there is so strong a determination to secure uniformity, that the

* “On the evening sitting of August 13th, 1849, the conference was offered for acceptance, an *interesting RELIC*—the Hymn Book used by our venerable founder, and written with his own hand. It was presented by Mr. Samuel Highfield, son of the Rev. George Highfield, on *condition that it be preserved at Woodhouse Grove School, and that visitors shall see it and have access to it.* IT WAS CORDIALLY ACCEPTED.”—*Wesleyan Times*, Aug. 16th, 1849.

expulsion of three talented ministers is not a price too costly to pay for it, the power of excommunication is in dangerous hands, and may ere long be inconveniently felt by such as shall dare to suspect the infallibility of Wesleyan rulers, or offer the slightest resistance to conference decree.

Is it not an interference with the rights of conscience, to send out a declaration, as a previous conference has done, and expect every minister to sign it, or lose caste among his brethren, if even he be not expelled from their ranks? Here is a steady, deliberate, and concerted aim at uniformity. And to accomplish it, the rights of conscience have been shamefully assailed. These rights, sacred as they are, have been treated as none but despots would treat them—they have been sneered at; and a minister who had refused to sign the declaration as a “*matter of conscience*” was told “**THAT HE SHOULD HAVE SETTLED THE QUESTION OF CONSCIENCE BEFORE HE ENTERED THE CONNEXION!**” What a monstrous sentiment! It would have disgraced a Cardinal or a Pope. What? and are methodist ministers when they enter the connexion, to give up the right of exercising conscience on matters of policy and prudence? Are they to pledge submission, if not approval to all that the rulers in methodism may think proper afterwards to do? And are they to be so spell-bound to methodism *as it is*, and *AS IT MAY BE*, that no opinion must be expressed on pain of presidential censure, and no opposition rendered on pain of expulsion? Awful! Monstrous!!

What is this but popery?—an interference with the rights of conscience and a determination to secure uniformity. This has been the main feature of conference—a determination to humble, or expel. This has been done. Some have been humbled. Others have been expelled. Look at the inquisitorial process of arraigning on suspicion, and condemning without accuser, trial or witness. Look at the unchristian conduct of ministers, vociferously clamouring down every opponent. Look at the partiality of the chair, ruling “order” for every conservative, and “out of order” invariably for the liberals; and read in these circumstances the marks of the Beast. This conference, has brought out the true character of its polity; absolute, tyrannical and despotic. It has shewn the Wesleyan people, that ministers can abuse their unchecked power, and will do so in emergencies. It is

now for the Wesleyan people to consider, and say whether they will submit to such despotism—whether by their silence, they will accelerate the downfal of their useful community, or, by their firm, well digested, and unflinching demand for reform, place it on a solid and immovable basis. The destiny of methodism is trembling in the balance. It is in the peoples' power to turn the scales which way they please. Which shall it be?

Another element in popery, and a third mark of the Beast on "methodism as it is," is

THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF ITS SPIRIT.

On this point we shall be brief, as this evil is the offspring of the others, and if the others are removed, this will die away. Popery considered itself the true church—the only church, and treated others as heretics; the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans; and papists never co-operated with other communities. There was an exclusiveness and a sectarianism in popery which ate out its spirituality. Christianity cannot be restricted. It is universal. Confine it and it will die. So it did in the popish churches. The exclusiveness of popery, in its spirit and operations, originated many evils unnecessary to be detailed here. Has not Wesleyanism in it something of this exclusiveness? and does it not refuse co-operation with other communities as far as the spirit of the times will permit? It is true that there have been of late, instances of a fraternizing disposition. We have rejoiced to see them. But these instances are not the result of Wesleyanism as a system; they exist in defiance of it. Nor is this the spirit of the Body. The exclusiveness of Wesleyanism is notorious.

Another element in popery and a fourth mark of the Beast on "methodism as it is" is

ITS DENOMINATIONAL PRIDE.

Pride was both the parent and offspring of popery. And of all sins perhaps it is the most insidious—the most prolific. It is both self-supporting and self-propagating. Can we wonder then, that pride

should have spread under a system like popery, where every thing was congenial to its growth? It would have been a wonder if it had not spread. Every christian knows that it is with difficulty the heart is kept humble, even in afflictions, privations and adversity, where every thing is calculated to give vanity a convulsive shock. But few indeed can bear prosperity. Wealth, respectability and power, have a tendency to puff men up, and make them think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. What is true of individuals is true of communities. Here is the danger, a proud man is the last who detects his pride; so a proud community is the last that perceives it. It always has been so; it is so still. Let modern methodists give heed to themselves. This sin is upon them. No man of observation can have failed to mark its existence and growth in the Wesleyan community during the last few years. Large, costly, and in some instances extravagantly decorated sanctuaries—a great number of wealthy friends—congregations displaying much worldly conformity—and a consciousness of political power in the nation have not been without their influence. Aspiring after empty and easily attained titles—titles which bespeak the liberality of the donor far more than the talent of the receiver—is no strong indication of humility. How unlike the humility of the celebrated Robert Hall, whose title was not known of until his diploma was found among his posthumous papers! Fawning upon the Established Church of our land, and disclaiming the appellation of “Dissenters,” shew the object aimed at, and betray a disposition to share in State patronage—to tread in that path which no church ever trod in yet, without an awful degeneracy—and which no church can desire to tread in, until it has lost something of its primitive simplicity—its burning spirituality. Clamouring for the presidential chair, partakes in some measure of that pride which the Saviour condemned in those who sought for the upper seats in the Synagogue. While the arrogance of conference in calling itself a “Venerable Assembly” so often, and every time displaying its excited vanity by loud and repeated cheers, presents a striking contrast with the methodism of Wesley and the conferences of a century ago. These with other indications of pride that we have marked arise from, or at least are fostered by, the absolute and unchecked power of the ministry. The connexion must put on the check. It must either have a safety-valve or explode.

Another element in popery, and the last mark of the Beast, on "methodism as it is," to which we shall at present allude, is

ITS DISPOSITION TO PERSECUTE.

Popery had persecution in a variety of forms, and in different degrees. The rack and the flames are not essential to persecution. Men may be the victims of persecution without the existence of either. Persecution does not mean mere bodily punishment. To diminish a persons' comforts, to wound his feelings ; to injure his reputation or to diminish his usefulness merely because he will not conform to the *ipse dixit* of another, is, to all intents and purposes—persecution.

Is there not this spirit then in the methodism of our day? Look at the course which was pursued by the conservative rulers, in reference to that holy and useful man—the Rev. Jas. Caughey. A man of character, and long standing ; a regularly ordained minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. He went, like his master, from place to place, doing good. No one could listen to his preaching without perceiving that he was deeply skilled in the sciences of human nature and religious experience—an adept in winning souls. His labours were very extensively owned of God, and his private character most highly esteemed by those who knew him best. Many are now in glory, saved through his instrumentality and many are on their way. The conference could prefer no charge against him, and yet they requested the American conference to re-call him, assigning as reasons for that request, things unfounded in truth, and calculated to wound his feelings—injure his reputation—and diminish his usefulness, but what are all these when they stand in the way of power-loving rulers? Was not this persecution? Yes, and had not Mr. Caughey been what he professed to be, he would have rent the connexion. He was a man of God. But the conference persecuted him, and the results of that persecution have not all been experienced yet. The conference may attempt to repair that wrong now—by receiving the Huddersfield and Sheffield deputation on his case "courteously," and promising to read the protest to conference. Nay, they may even agree for him to visit them again. But all this is only a stroke of policy, intended to quell the agitated state of the community. Would they have received the

deputation or read the protest two years ago? The policy of jesuitism, and the principles of popery are never far distant from each other and cannot long be seperated.

As to the spirit of persecution, could any thing in the Inquisition of old, ever exceed the trials—nay, trials they had none; could any thing ever exceed the arraignment, interrogation and expulsion of the three methodist martyrs, Everett, Griffith and Dunn? The *Patriot* has well compared it to “an assize proceeding, with as much vigour as a Judge Jefferies could desire.” But even this falls short. Judge Jefferies would never have tried a man who had no accusers, and against whom no true bill had been found. Nor would he, severe as he was, have condemned and sentenced a man, merely on suspicion, without a vestige of evidence. Yet all this, did the Wesleyan Conference of 1849.

Does not “methodism as it is,” contain the elements of popery? Are not the marks of the Beast upon it? They are. And it becomes the Wesleyan people to reform these abuses—and to do it now, while reformation is possible. Let them not be turned from the main point by talking about our “venerable founder.” Systems, and not men, are the question. Popery pretended that it was handed down from the Apostles. But was that proof of its purity? Did Luther and the reformers think so? No. If they had, our circumstances would have been widely different—vastly inferior to what they are. There is a time to be silent, and a time to speak. This is the time for Wesleyans to think—to speak and to act. Let your love for methodism continue unabated, but try to reform her abuses. Stand by the expelled. If you fail and have to secede, you will not be the first, as the younger branches of methodism attest. Kilham and the New Connexion had a struggle—for which struggle every methodist, up to the present moment, is personally indebted. Bourne, Clowes and the Primitives had a struggle. Holy and useful men! Theirs was a struggle for revivalism—the very principle which gave methodism birth. Warren and the Association also had a struggle, and are now a numerous and increasing community. In each of these struggles—defeat was victory. It may be so with you. But if you can be more successful—if you can reform the parent community, and make it what is capable of being, an instrument of untold good, both the community and the world will have cause to hold you in grateful remembrance. You may be suc-

cessful if you are united—and strike with unanimity and firmness, at the absolute and unchecked power of the ministry. Wrench from the hands of ecclesiastics the weapons of despotism, and be yourselves the check. Contend for a seat, side by side in conference. Let nothing move you from your purpose. Contend that those who have been unrighteously expelled may be reinstated. Never give up your points. And if after all you fail, COME OUT—not of methodism—but of methodism as it is. Exchange corruption for purity—and contention for peace. Unite with those who have fought the same battles before, or if thought better, organize a reformed methodist community, with which the other methodist communities can fraternize if not amalgamate. These however are after considerations. The point now is to awake both Wesleyan people and ministers to a conviction—that methodism must be reformed—that this is the time to do it—and that, that man is a enemy to methodism who either opposes, or stands neutral. These are the objects of this pamphlet. If it succeed, to God be all the praise ; if not, the Author will have the satisfaction of having done what he could, and the sin of a degenerate methodism cannot be laid at his door.